

## Miscellaneous.

**THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS IN WESTMINSTER.**—It has been for some time generally known that considerable improvements have been under the consideration of Government to be effected in the neighbourhood of Westminster, especially in those parts where scenes of the grossest description daily and nightly take place, which, it is reported, are leased by the Dean and Chapter of Westminster to other persons, and then sub-let to the most infamous characters. The district which this comprises consists of Orchard-street, New Pye-street, Duck-lane, New Tothill-street, and the vast number of courts which diverge from them. The whole of these buildings are to be taken down, and a most excellent improvement, not only morally but sanatorily, will be effected. The courts and alleys and streets are thickly inhabited by unfortunate creatures, and even the supply of water is obtained from the houses of persons living at a distance, who are generally their landlords, and who permit them to reside in their miserable tenements on the payment of a nightly rent. It was in Orchard-street that Oliver Cromwell had one of his palaces, but in those days Palmer's Village was close beside it, and was the seat of gentlemen's country-houses. In James-street, where Lady Dacre's almshouses now stand, Lady Dacre had her residence, and this by her will has been devoted to the erection, many years since, of one of the first institutions in England, nearly equal to that of Christ's Hospital, in the city of London. Peter-street derives its name from having been built on the grounds upon which formerly stood a splendid mansion belonging to an ancestor of the present Lord Petre. Lady Dacre left to the city an estate of between two and three acres of ground, the garden ground, and that called Palmer's Village, which has been occupied in small tenements for a number of years; and on the 2nd instant, the occupants, having had previous notice, were removing their trifling goods. The whole of this space is to form a part of the new street from Westminster Abbey to Buckingham Palace. The gentlemen connected with the woods and forests were on the same day engaged in valuing the estates belonging to the trustees of Lady Dacre and the city, in order to estimate the proportions due to them, as well as to the tenants. The work of improvement, as long desired, will commence immediately.—*Globe*.

**AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.**—An agricultural college is about to be established, by royal charter, in the vicinity of Cirencester, to be opened for pupils from all parts of the kingdom. The necessary capital is to be raised in shares. The affairs of the company will be managed by a committee chosen by the shareholders, who will act under the authority of the charter, by which the liability of the shareholders will be limited to the amount of their respective shares. A suitable farm, and a moiety of the estimated cost of the buildings, have been provided by Earl Bathurst; the college and the other buildings will be erected on the farm. The whole establishment will be under the direction of a headmaster, a practical farmer, and possessing scientific and general qualifications for so important a situation, who will have under him the requisite tutors, farm bailiffs, &c. The pupils will be instructed in the science applicable to agriculture, such as chemistry, geology, mechanics, botany, &c.; and a portion of their time will be employed on the farm in manual labour, so as to obtain a complete knowledge of farm work.—*Suffordshire Advertiser*.

**THE ISTHMIAN OF PANAMA.**—The following appears in the *Courrier Français*:—"We learn from a source upon which we can confidently rely, that the hopes which have been entertained relative to the cutting of the Isthmus of Panama cannot be realized. M. Garella is returned from making his survey, and the result of it is that the Isthmus rises between the two oceans not merely to the height of ten yards above the level of the sea, as stated by the Franco-Grenadine Company, but in reality to 125 yards; so that, instead of a single trench or canal without any sluice, which would have been an artificial strait, as we had been given by the company's engineers to expect, nothing can be thought of less than a canal with sixty locks."

**THE LONDON DOCKS.**—The extensive alterations and improvements in progress at this great commercial establishment are proceeding very rapidly. The dock establishment was removed some time since from the original superintendent's office, adjoining the west quay, to the building which formerly stood outside the dock walls parallel with the Custom-house, in the occupation of the Excise and Government Emigration Departments, and which has been considerably enlarged, and now includes offices for the whole of the superintendent's department in addition to committee and board-rooms for the directors, &c. The boundary-wall of the dock has been extended outside this new dock-house and also includes the Custom-house within the dock walls, coming to a point at the corner of East Smithfield and Nightingale-lane, on which spot a new entrance has been erected facing the proposed new street from Shoreditch Church. The entrance consists of two large gates, one for the entrance and another for the exit of waggons, a great though a rare convenience at similar establishments, and at the top of the pivot connecting the two gates it is intended to place a bode light of considerable power. The baggage warehouse, which formerly adjoined the superintendent's office at the west quay, has been removed to a warehouse appropriated to the purpose, a little further to the right of the quay, adjoining the Hermitage basin. On the sites of the old superintendent's office and baggage warehouse a very extensive warehouse has been erected, intended principally for the housing of tea, and underneath this warehouse spacious vaults have been made, and in which a great quantity of wines and spirits have already been deposited.

**SIR EDWARD KERRISON'S "OAKLEY HOMES,"** IN SUFFOLK.—There are now being erected in the pretty village of Hoxne, on a healthy spot, near the venerable church where many of the "forefathers of the hamlet sleep," several neat cottages, to be tenanted by respectable and industrious old people, who may have lived all their lives in the parishes on the Oakley estates. They are to be called "The Oakley Homes;" the tenants to occupy for life, and to be rent free. In addition, also, to the present well-organized school, at which nearly 100 boys are every week receiving a sound education, not only religious, but moral and industrial—many of the larger boys having small garden allotments for cultivation—there is now in course of erection a Sunday-school, which is to provide sufficient accommodation for eighty children. This work is also to be completed and carried on at Sir Edward Kerrison's expense. The whole of these new buildings are in the Gothic style, from designs by Smirke, and when completed will form a great additional ornament to the village.—*Ipswich Journal*.

**EXTRAORDINARY SALES OF SHARES IN THE THAMES TUNNEL.**—One hundred shares in the Thames Tunnel, upon which 50*l.* each had been paid up, amounting to 5,000*l.*, were sold a few days since at the Auction Mart by Mr. Shuttleworth, at 6*s.* per 50*l.* share, realizing only 30*l.*, being 4,970*l.* less than had been paid for them. The sale was a *bond fide* one, the shares having been put up by the executors of a deceased gentleman.

**BIRKENHEAD DOCKS.**—The day for the laying of the first stone of these important works is now definitely fixed, we understand, for Wednesday, the 23rd instant, when Sir Philip de Malpas Grey Egerton, M.P. for South Cheshire, will officiate on the occasion. Preparations for the public proceedings of the day are under the consideration of the principal inhabitants.—*Liverpool Albion*.

The most remarkable excavator in modern times, in any part of the world, has been the Pasha of Egypt. The Mahmoodie canal alone is twenty-three leagues in length: no fewer than 313,000 men having been occupied for the space of ten months in its construction. For some years past, the number of workmen employed in hydraulic works in Egypt has exceeded 350,000.—*Bombay Times*.

**PUBLIC BATHS AND WASHING HOUSES.**—A public meeting will be held at the Egyptian Hall, Mansion House, on Thursday, the 16th instant, for the purpose of promoting the establishment of cold and warm baths and washing houses, for the labouring classes. The Right Hon. the Lord Mayor will preside.

**THE VICTORIA PARK.**—A communication is said to have been made from the directors of the East London Waterworks to her Majesty's Commissioners of Woods and Forests, in which the former very liberally offer to supply two or three fountains in the Victoria park with an abundant quantity of water gratuitously, provided it is subsequently permitted to flow into public baths to be erected in the vicinity for the use of the poor. Several benevolent gentlemen, at the head of whom is Mr. William Cotton, Governor of the Bank of England, are at present projecting a plan for the erection of baths at the east end of the metropolis, where the poorer classes of society may be enabled to obtain luxuries so conducive to health, and of which they are at present totally deprived, at a charge commensurate with their means. The want of public baths, or indeed any place for bathing, at the east end of the town has been severely felt.

## Tenders.

TENDERS delivered for repairing, &c., a House in Bedford-row.—Mr. Charles Broadbridge, 87, Great Portland-street, Surveyor. October 9, 1844.

Ashby	£224
Locke and Neaham	192
Matthews	188
Whitelaw	183

## NOTICES OF CONTRACTS.

For such Bricklayers, Carpenters, Masons, and other Works, in the Cleansing, Building, and Repairing the public Sewers and Drains for the City and Liberty of Westminster.—Mr. Lewis C. Herslett, Clerk, 1, Greek-street, Soho, October 15.

For Building a Sewer in Robin Hood-court and New-street-square, London.—Joseph Daw, Sewers Office, Guildhall. October 15.

For re-Building of Shotter's Mill, in the Parish of Linchmere, Sussex.—The Royal Farmers' and General Fire, Life, and Rail Insurance Office. October 24.

For Surveying, Levelling, and Mapping of all lands lying within certain districts in Lincolnshire. Work to be completed on or before May 1, 1845.—M. Dadding, Clerk of Sewers, Lincoln. October 16.

For Excavating and Completing of several miles in length of new Water Courses, and Erecting a number of Bridges, Culverts, &c., connected therewith.—Messrs. George Leather and Son, Civil Engineers, Leeds. October 15.

For 250 Tons of the true Red Roman Pozzolano, from the works of Carlo Nepoti, called the Cave of St. Paul, near Civita Vecchia. W. H. Haffam, Secretary, Dock Office, Hull. October 15.

For Building a Church to contain 1,250 persons at Woolwich, Kent.—Mr. Francis E. H. Fowler, Architect, 28, Sackville-street, Piccadilly. Oct. 19.

For Building a French Church and School-House in Plantree-street, Bloomsbury.—Mr. Jacob Vincent, 10, South-square, Gray's-inn. October 18.

## COMPETITIONS.

PREMIUM of 25 guineas for the best and another of 15 guineas for the second best design for laying out for building purposes a plot of land, containing about nine acres and a half, situate in the borough of Reading, having a frontage of upwards of 900 feet, and being of the depth of about 460 feet. Further particulars of J. J. Blandy, Esq., Solicitor, Reading; or of Messrs. Gregory, Faulkner, Gregory, and Bourdillon, 1, Bedford-row, London. November 15.

PREMIUM of 500*l.*, being a legacy bequeathed for a painting to be placed in the recess over the communion table of St. James's Church, Bermondsey. The subject to be the Ascension of our Saviour. Further particulars of the trustees of that church.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. Z.—A letter of introduction from the clergyman of the parish in which you reside, from a banker, or from any other known responsible person, addressed to either of the Librarians, or to the Secretary of the British Museum, will gain for you an admission to the Library.

J. Bet.—We cannot without a view of the premises at Pentonville, answer the question.

"A Bath Stone" is referred to the leading article of last year's last number of "The Builder," and we advise him to become an inmate of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, where he will find relatives all around him, in every state of disease, and of every age, from 20 to 70 years; but he must apply soon, for we lately saw Mr. Mollcott, the mason, taking particulars for an estimate for the renewal of its masonry with Portland stone.